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ABSTRACT

To make scientific, technical, and management information available to the general populace of Wisconsin, the Information Services Division (ISD) of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction undertook a project to establish a one-stop center at the University of Wisconsin that could provide users access to more than a dozen campus libraries. To insure active participation, brochures announcing the service were distributed to all state libraries and to members of the business and industrial community. Presently, ISD has the capacity to do extensive manual and computer literature searches. (EMH)

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KNOW
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AND

ISD
(INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION)

by

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Within the past ten years much has been written about the information explosion, the increased need and demand for library services, and the ever growing necessity for information and library networking.

Since the early 1960's Wisconsin's information community has worked toward establishing a formal network to tie together the state's library resources. Organizations, associations, librarians, information specialists and other interested persons have been working together at local, regional and state levels to improve information and library resources and to promote efficient, economic sharing through cooperation.

In 1969 the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Library Services contracted with Joseph Becker and Robert Hayes to study the then-existing Wisconsin interlibrary cooperation and networks and to develop a plan for the future. The study, which is being used today as a guide, is primarily concerned with public library services; but it does reflect a basic understanding of the complexities and numerous levels of inter-institutional cooperation. It is this latter, as practiced by the Information Services Division, that is the subject of this paper. The "Wisconsin Idea"--knowledge put to work in every possible way for the advancement of society--has always been part of the University of Wisconsin's tradition of service to Wisconsin and its people.

In 1962 the University, recognizing the rapid expansion of knowledge in science and technology and the impact and speed with which this knowledge was affecting modern business and industry, appointed an ad hoc faculty committee to study additional way of facilitating the application of the University's resources to aid Wisconsin business and industry.

The study was completed in March of 1968; at that time the committee's policy statement declared that

> It will be the objective of the University to cooperate with Wisconsin agriculture, banking, commerce, and industry to create a scientific base and milieu within the state in national and international commerce and trade, as well as in health, space, and defense activities of the Federal Government. The University will cooperate with industry and finance to develop a greater awareness of the impact of science and technology on economic growth and will enlarge University programs designed to take advanced arts of modern management to the Wisconsin business community.

The Committee recommended a number of specific objectives and supporting actions. By 1964 the multifaceted University Industry Research Program, parent organization of the Information Services Division, had been established under the sponsorship of the Graduate School.

One of UIR's charges from the ad hoc committee was to make University library facilities available to Wisconsin's scientific, technical, and management personnel. The University's outstanding information collection, housed in more than a dozen different campus locations, has always been nominally available to citizens of Wisconsin; but actual use requires, in addition to time and effort, a knowledge of the campus--for often the needed information is housed in several locations. UIR determined that what was needed was a one-stop campus center that would serve a client according to his needs and wishes, whether his request called for only a quick single answer or more lengthy assistance. In February of 1964 the Information Services Division of UIR came into being.

In the early '60's operations such as ISD were unique and generally without precedent. (There are in fact only about six or seven in existence today). Consequently, one of ISD's first tasks was to publicize its existence, not only to Wisconsin business and industry but also to the Wisconsin information community.

Cooperation of the campus libraries and information ~~centers was imperative if~~ ISD was to produce the results it promised. Major campus libraries were contacted; ISD's objectives were outlined, arrangements were made for inter-library loan and photocopy, and ground rules established for good working relationships. To pave the way for its active participation in the state's information network, ISD distributed its brochure to all Wisconsin public libraries. ISD staff participated in Wisconsin Library Association activities, and whenever feasible, offered its services to help locate or identify scientific and technical information sources. Orginally there were qualms about the advis-ability of such an offer, and concern that ISD might be inundated with requests that belonged elsewhere. However, these fears were groundless; the offer was not abused, and today ISD is noted in Wisconsin reference circles for providing science/technology, reference/referral aid.

Several approaches were used to publicize ISD to the Wisconsin business and industrial community. An informal Wisconsin SLA information network had been in existence for years, and ISD's staff active SLA members. The Wisconsin SLA Chapter Bulletin carried an article about the new service; each SLA member was mailed a copy of the ISD brochure, and ISD became an accepted node in the Wisconsin SLA network.

Reaching Wisconsin non-SLA business and industrial librarians, and those businesses and industries without libraries, was more of a challenge. A UIR mailing list was drawn up to distribute the brochures to company executives, R & D engineers, key governmental officials, and so forth. UIR publicized Information Services Division in its newsletter and bulletin, and UIR consultants distributed ISD brochures whenever they did site visits. Word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied clients and referrals from other librarians and information specialists completed the picture.

In July of 1966 UIR, in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin Extension, expanded its technical and scientific information program with funding from the State Technical Services Act. ISD was designated to be the Wisconsin STS technical information center for the business and industrial community, and STS operating grants enabled ISD to expand its services and keep user costs at a minimum. As most of you know, STS was phased out in 1970. At that time ISD, with LeRoy Zweifel, Engineering Librarian, continuing as director, was moved under the sponsorship of the University of Wisconsin College of Engineering with some additional support from the UIR Program and the Sea Grant Program. This arrangement continues today.

Today ISD offers confidential, fast and efficient service to business and industry throughout the entire United States. About 90 percent of all requests are filled on campus and are back in the mail the same day as received. Requests are accepted on A.L.A. forms, stationery, purchase order forms and via TWX and telephone. We serve a diverse clientele, many of whom do not have libraries; therefore citation verification was not made mandatory. If verification is needed, ISD does it, and also does it for non-client librarians on a one-citation-per-request basis.

As a one-stop information center ISD searches out answers on a local, regional, national and international level. If the client can accept a time lag, ISD will pursue a question until an answer is forthcoming.

Like other similar services, ISD does customized computer and manual literature searches for its clientele. MEDLINE is available through the Middleton Medical Library, CAIN searches are done by the Steenbock Agriculture Library and RECON and DIALOG are on-line in the Engineering Library where ISD now has permanent offices. Since the Engineering Library is one of the few libraries in Wisconsin

to have terminals, and many state librarians are interested in how computerized searches are done, ISD recently worked with the Wisconsin chapters of SLA and ASIS to sponsor a one-day institute on data bases and information retrieval. The institute was open to all Wisconsin librarians. ~~At ISD's suggestion the~~ Engineering Library compiled and has made available a list of the RECON and DIALOG data bases, hard copy counterparts, years covered on-line and the number of citations in each data base at present. Manual searches require familiarity with a wide variety of abstracting and indexing services; ISD is currently working with the Library School, the MALC publications committee, and interested campus librarians to compile and index a bibliography of campus available indexing and abstracting services. In addition to manual searches ISD will upon request offer suggestions as to which indexes or abstracts might be pertinent to a search that another librarian or librarian's client is doing.

ISD's extensive participation in and use of Madison area resources has resulted in interesting projects. In 1969 I was asked to serve on a committee to determine what kinds of cooperative information programs might be developed for the Madison metropolitan area (this encompasses all of Dane County, with Madison, the state capital, in the nucleus). This resulted in the formation of the Madison Area Library Council. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Library Services accepted MALC's proposal for Title III monies; ISD granted me a halftime leave for six months to become MALC's first coordinator. MALC's beginning projects included a newsletter, scheduled and advertised library open houses and solicitation of members. The major project, however, was the compilation of the first edition of The Directory of Library and Information Sources in Dane County which listed collections, key personnel, location, telephone, services and availability to secondary clientele.

Within the past three years I have served as consultant for Wisconsin Title III projects, working with a cross section of state librarians and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction library consultants. This past fall brought a two year term on the MALC board and I have been a member of its publications committee since the beginning.

ISD professional contacts with special librarians throughout the state contributed to my being Wisconsin SLA Chapter bulletin editor twice, and I served as Chapter president in 1971.

In addition to supporting ISD's networking activities ISD director LeRoy Zweifel serves as treasurer of the Council of Wisconsin Librarians and budget coordinator for COWL's Wisconsin Interlibrary Services (WILS), which is patterned after Minnesota's MINITEX. Mr. Zweifel is also on COWL's Shared Resources Committee, which is completing a survey of computer hardware and software available to Wisconsin information people.

ISD library specialist Diane Egbert lent her expertise to help a Madison community group compile a services directory which was published in April. Another ISD staff member, Leonard Black, recently finished updating The Union List of Periodicals in Dane County Libraries.

Thus ISD, not neglecting its primary objective of service to business and industry, also strongly participates in the formation and development of the Knowledge Network of Wisconsin.